



# Shamanism in Northern and Southern Eurasia: Their Distinctive Methods of Change of Consciousness

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Citation	Witzel, Michael E. J. 2011. Shamanism in northern and southern Eurasia: Their distinctive methods of change of consciousness. <i>Social Science Information</i> 50(1): 39-61.
Published Version	<a href="https://doi.org/10.1177/0539018410391044">doi:10.1177/0539018410391044</a>
Citable link	<a href="http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:8456537">http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:8456537</a>
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Michael Witzel

## **Shamanism in Northern and Southern Eurasia: their distinct methods of change of consciousness**

### **Abstract in English**

**This paper seeks to establish that the ‘southern’ shamanism of the San, Andamanese and Australian Aboriginals differs substantially from the well known ‘classical’ Siberian one found in various forms in large parts of Eurasia and the Americas (“Laurasia”). Second, the typical southern (“Gondwana”) shamanistic features of heat rising up the spine are linked to medieval Indian Kundalini Yoga and some representations in Paleolithic art. This process is an important aspect of the change of consciousness initiated by shamanistic initiation and practice.**

### **Key words in English**

**Siberian shamanism, initiation, ascent, consciousness, possession, Gondwana mythology, San, Andamanese, Australian Aboriginals, body heat, Out of Africa movement, Laurasian mythology, stone age art, shamanic teachings.**

### **§1 Introduction**

Shamanism<sup>1</sup> is a topic that has been under constant and controversial<sup>2</sup> discussion,<sup>3</sup> especially since Eliade.<sup>4</sup> It is best known in its Siberian version, treated by many well-known specialists, including R. Hamayon.<sup>5</sup> In shamanistic belief, the world is filled by spirits that affect all living beings. In our present context, it is important to underline the change of consciousness that the shamanic adept undergoes and that the fully developed shaman experiences each time he performs a shamanic session. This includes, with Eliade and others --- mostly following its ‘typical’ Siberian form --- the following aspects.

Spirits exist and play important roles both in individual lives and in human society; they can be good or evil. The shaman can communicate with the spirit world. The male or female adept, after a sudden crisis, believes that he is chosen, is then recreated and educated by the spirits. He becomes an 'embodiment' of his spirit guardian or helping spirit ('familiar') or of his double, an (external) soul in animal form. He then is able to travel to the other worlds to communicate with the gods and spirits, in a state of ecstasy exhibited in his rituals.

The shaman employs trance-inducing techniques to incite visionary ecstasy and to go on 'vision quests'. This is achieved by music (drumming), dancing, recitation of certain texts, mantras, etc. The shaman's spirit can leave the body to enter the supernatural world to search for answers. He evokes animal images as spirit guides, omens, and message-bearers. He can treat sickness caused by evil spirits. The shaman can tell the future by crystal gazing, throwing bones or runes; he can also perform many other forms of divination.

Shamanism requires special knowledge and abilities, usually learned during a long apprenticeship. Shamans are not tied to individual religions and usually operate outside them. They work alone (although some take on an apprentice or a minor shamanic helper).<sup>6</sup> They have a number of functions, which depend very much on their respective cultures.

They mediate between the various worlds. This includes, first of all, acting as a psychopomp, as healers (like psychologists and doctors), or as fortune-tellers, and even as political advisers; they preserve their individual tribal traditions by storytelling and singing songs. They can also lead a sacrifice, and act as priests. In some cultures, a shaman can have several functions at the same time. A shaman also determine society's features --- such as the movements of nomadic tribes. He thus acts as the transmitter of traditional tribal lore, including that about the 'origins' of the tribe or 'the shaman' as such, known only to some extent by most adults.

## **§2 Definition**

However, there remains the problem of a proper definition of the terms ‘shaman’ and ‘shamanism’. Normally, we take this disputed term to mean the Siberian variety that has briefly been characterized above. However, both the word ‘shaman’ and the concept of ‘shamanism’ have been employed in many ways in scholarly, and especially so in popular, literature. The word *shaman* is a Tungus word and it is not derived from the Indo-Aryan word for an ascetic or Buddhist monk, *śramaṇa/samana*. Instead, *šamán* is a Tungus (or Manchu) word and means ‘he or she who knows’. It may be advantageous, therefore, to start with a definition.<sup>7</sup> Walter and Fridman (2004) stress the current broad interpretation of the term as designating *any kind of ecstatic behavior*, including spirit possession, witchcraft, even cannibalism, but, on the other hand, they also offer a narrow definition that stresses initiatory crisis, vision quest, an experience of dismemberment and regeneration, climbing the sacred (world) tree, spirit flight, the role of the shaman as healer, and the use of trance.<sup>8</sup> For our purpose it will be most important to investigate the way a layperson becomes a shaman, what changes in consciousness he or she undergoes, and what changes shamans experience each time they ‘shamanize’. We will return to this topic later.

In addition to the so-called ‘classical’ Siberian form, shamanic practices occur in large number of areas south to it,<sup>9</sup> and across the ocean in the Americas. They also occur in parts of Africa, in the Andaman Islands, with the Semang in the Malay Peninsula, in New Guinea, Australia and South America. Eliade’s discussion of African and, in part, of Australian shamanism, is not adequate,<sup>10</sup> while his version of the ‘typical’ North Asian/Siberian and Amerindian<sup>11</sup> shamanism has been reconfirmed by many scholars. He<sup>12</sup> nevertheless stresses the similarities between Siberian and Australian initiation rites as important for the role of shamanism and its Paleolithic origins, especially the importance of caves.<sup>13</sup> He also compares the insertion of crystals found with the Semang, Australians and South American Indians,<sup>14</sup> which he correctly regards as an archaic trait.<sup>15</sup> The same applies to dissecting of the body of the initiate in Australia and Siberia.<sup>16</sup>

However, once we take into account that these peoples live close to the place of human origins in East Africa, and indeed are remnants of the early dispersal along the Indian Ocean, our gaze focused on Siberia must be reversed. Instead, the San, Hadza/Sandawe, the Andamanese and the Australians have preserved a *prototype* of what later became Siberian and Amerindian shamanism (that is to be distinguished from mere possession).

The earlier Gondwana <sup>1</sup>versions have dancing but they do not yet have the typical Siberian feature of shamanistic drumming<sup>17</sup> and not yet much of the shamanic dress. Nevertheless they share, instead, a unique perception of difficultly controlled heat that raises from the lower end of the spine upwards,<sup>18</sup> --- a feature that is still retained in some forms of Indian Yoga.<sup>19</sup> Eliade, however, erroneously regards such ‘heat’ as a general phenomenon connected with magic, not as a typical shamanistic trait.<sup>20</sup> We will return to the details of Southern shamanism after taking a closer look at its Siberian form.

### **§3 Siberian shamanism**

As we know best about the ‘classical’, Siberian form of shamanism, we begin with a brief description of its features. A comprehensive description of this narrow (Siberian) version is the one recently given by Basilov:<sup>21</sup> shamanism ... emerged in the period when hunting and gathering were the main means to support life ... [The] most important ... beliefs [are:] (a) all the surrounding world is animated, inhabited

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<sup>1</sup> **The geological term ‘Gondwana’ that embraces the southern (sub)continents of Africa, India, Australia etc., is used here to indicate the ‘southern type’ mythologies found in sub-Saharan Africa etc. that differ considerably from the ‘northern’ ones of Laurasia. The latter geological term includes Eurasia and North America, which I here extend, for practical purposes, to South America; for details see Witzel (2001).**

by the spirits who can influence man's life; (b) there are general and reciprocal interconnections in nature (humans included); (c) human beings are not superior but equal to the other forms of life; (d) human society is closely connected with the cosmos; (e) it is possible for human beings to acquire some qualities of a spirit and visit the other worlds; (f) the aim of religious activity is to defend and make prosperous a small group of kinsmen.<sup>22</sup> Or, in more detail, the shamans can be described as follows.

(1) The ideological background is that humans and spirits<sup>23</sup> or deities are closely related and interact, especially through the shaman, who insures the success of the clan in hunting and other activities. (2) The shaman is usually 'called' by spirit(ual) powers who force him or her to become a shaman, sometimes in their dreams.<sup>24</sup> Other shamans choose their career.<sup>25</sup> (3) The shaman provides a link with the several (often 9) levels of the world, of which we can see only one, our own world. The other ones are those of the spirits or powers. Shamans move up to them by the axis mundi<sup>26</sup> (symbolized by a tree or a pathway)<sup>27</sup> and bring back knowledge. Or they do so by various (local) animal familiars. (4) As a healer, the shaman moves to other levels of the universe to find out what the spirits want, so that sickness, and other evils **can be overcome**.. Disease originates with certain spirits or through witchcraft (on the part of evil shamans). (5) Shamans heal by going to the spirit world, when in trance, and by leaving their own body or transforming into another being, the 'familiar'. They have one or more 'familiar': a particular animal,<sup>28</sup> a double soul, spirits of healing plants or sometimes those of deceased shamans. Healing proceeds by retrieving the soul of the ill person.<sup>29</sup> Shamans often enter the patient to fight the disease-causing spirit; they heal by driving the spirit out, sometimes by showing an extracted token of the spirit. They also guide the souls of the dead. (6) Shamans usually are very knowledgeable about local healing plants, learned directly from the spirits. Rocks or quartz are commonly used because of their special powers and their animating spirits.<sup>30</sup> They often are (spiritually) inserted into a shaman. (7) Shamans help the hunt with magic, by releasing the souls of the

animals, ensuring that they are not angered or hurt, or by letting a killed animal tell others to be killed. (8) Shamans may be exposed to risk that originates from the spirits, from enemy shamans, from some plants used, from altering their state of consciousness, and by not returning from the spiritual journey, which leads to death. These dangers are lessened by spells. (9) Returning to consciousness, this world and their body, the shaman transmits the messages of the spirits or deities. In sum, the shaman is an early form of the typical 'intermediary' (like later on, priests),<sup>31</sup> but he is one who has obtained and 'tamed' special powers that he exercises in trance, including heat.

### *Consciousness and initiation*

Clearly, certain psychological features, a change of consciousness and trance are involved in being a shaman. However, the shaman's state of mind is not one of 'possession', in the common use of the term, though possession and shamanic trance are frequently confused.<sup>32</sup> It is therefore important to distinguish both: on the one hand, the commonly found involuntary phenomenon of *possession* by a spirit<sup>33</sup> and, on the other, the *self-induced* shamanic *trance* that occurs after (initial) contact with the spirits, indicated by shaking. After this initial involuntary or accidental contact with the spirit world, it is the shaman's *quest* to contact spirits and the other worlds, while in *possession*, a spirit enters an *unwilling* being.<sup>34</sup>

Both possession and trance, however, share *one* major feature, which has led to the common confusion between the two terms. As described, the *initiatory* crisis of the future shaman is usually indicated by involuntary shaking, induced by the spirits in some form or other. This state is also called the 'shamanic illness'. The shamanistic initiatory crisis<sup>35</sup> functions as an --- involuntary --- rite of passage for the future shaman, and it involves both a more-or-less serious physical illness and/or a psychological crisis. This state is well attested across all shamanic regions.<sup>36</sup> Next to illness, the shaman-to-be may also be struck by lightning and may dream of thunder,<sup>37</sup> or may have a near-death experience.

During shamanic initiation, a certain complex of imagery is commonly experienced, whatever be the method of induction. This often includes being transported to the spirit world and interacting there with them, meeting a spiritual guide, being dissected or devoured by some being, and re-emerging transformed, and/or being ‘dismantled’ and ‘reassembled’ again, often with the addition of implanted tokens, such as magical crystals. In sum, in initiation, *transformation* occurs; this includes gaining the power to overcome death and rebirth.

While in this state, Siberian shamans may behave, according to our modern standards, in a psychotic fashion. Local Siberians, on the contrary, interpret this as initiatory ‘possession’ by a spirit who demands that the selected person becomes a shaman. However, the shaman does not remain ‘possessed’ after the initial crisis but undergoes a long period of training by other shamans. He can then freely call on his spirit (the familiar), when he *wishes* to go into trance. All of this is quite unlike the involuntary ‘possession’ by some kind of demon or spirit. In some societies, shamans acquire a personality split into two spirits; this includes shamanic dress and attributes, the role or function of the other sex or gender fluidity and/or same-sex sexual orientation.<sup>38</sup>

#### **§4 ‘Southern’ shamanism: the Gondwana area**

Some of the major forms of current non-‘Siberian’ shamanism<sup>39</sup> can be described while following the trail of the Out of Africa (‘Gondwana’)<sup>40</sup> migration of ‘anatomically modern humans’ (*Homo Sapiens sap.*), from west to east, some 65,000 years ago. By comparing all major forms extant on different continents, we may be able to learn more about their mutual relationship and history.

##### *1. San (Bushmen)*

The San (Khoi-San, Bushmen) have dances producing trance, during which they travel, like all shamans, over the earth or to the spirit world. This is like the Siberian shamans’ descent and ascent to the sky. Trance is often expressed as death, flying,



floating or even as drowning.<sup>41</sup> Initiation is of a rather prolonged nature.<sup>42</sup> But the San do not (yet) have the ‘classical’ dissection and transubstantiation of the shaman’s body --- perhaps except for the fact that they change into a flying eland antelope when in trance; apparently they do so also after death.

The Sans’ communal dance is accompanied by music made by men and women, using various local instruments and singing. However, this kind of dance is not (yet) the typical solitary dance of the lone (Siberian) shaman, accompanied by a circular drum. Dancing results in a trance collapse (*!aia, !kia*). The interaction of music, singers and dancers also produces ‘heat’: the dancers transmit heat (‘boiling’) to each other, and the women’s singing and music, too, activates it; from it, the shaman healers may draw energy.<sup>43</sup> San shamans<sup>44</sup> know of the difficult mastering of their internal *heat* (*n/um* ‘medicine’), which moves upward from the base of the spine. They use that power for healing.<sup>45</sup> It is controlled by medicine inside their body. The older experienced medicine men control *n/um*, and call the ‘traveling’ adept back into his body. This description immediately reminds one of the descriptions of some forms of Indian *yoga*, where the *kuṇḍalinī* power is awakened at the bottom of the spine (*guhya*) and likewise moves upwards, in several stages via a number of centers (*cakra*), up to the head, and beyond: through the skull it emerges above it.<sup>46</sup> Early evidence for shamanism is found in South African rock art, at 27,000 before the present era.<sup>47</sup>

We return now to other remnants of the Out of Africa exodus, the Andamanese, who barely survive on their chain of islands off the coast of Burma.

## 2. *Andamanese*

Andamanese shamans were called *Oko-jumu*, dreamers.<sup>48</sup> The term means ‘one who speaks from dreams’, from *jumu* ‘dream.’<sup>49</sup> Like the San, they were in contact with the dangerous primordial power inherent in all objects (*ot-kimil, gumul*), which means ‘hot’. This power is dangerous. People in contact with it are the *Oko-jumu*. The Shamans dream, meet the spirits in the jungle, ‘die’ and return to life. However, they

do not (yet) have the Siberian-style trance, nor is the community involved, for example by dancing, as with the San.<sup>50</sup>

According to Radcliffe-Brown's detailed account of 1922, 'initiation' could happen in three ways: by 'dying', by going into the jungle, by meeting spirits in dreams. Certain men or boys could even communicate with the spirits in extraordinary dreams, such as of the spirit of a dead person, or of spirits of the forest or sea. Initially, a person was contacted by the spirits, for example when having been unconscious ('dead') for up to 12 hours. The *Oko-jumu* met the spirits in the jungle, and there got their powers. They continued to go to the jungle to meet spirits as their friends. Only men could be *oko-paiad*, but in North Andaman rarely women too could possess these powers. After initiation, one continued to communicate with the spirits in one's sleep (dreaming); using their power one could cause and cure illness.

Shamanic heat was called *kimil*, 'hot'. The word carries many meanings, but it is always connected with extra-ordinary states that were regarded as dangerous, such as: that of young man/woman when passing through or having recently passed through the initiation ceremony; the condition after eating certain types of 'powerful' foods. These conditions produced or had inherent 'heat.'

Surprisingly, this idea persists in modern India --- whether Hindu or Muslim -- where many objects or persons (like the Guru) are believed to be 'hot' and therefore have to be 'cooled' down by a variety of methods --- such as pouring milk over a *Śivaliṅgam*.<sup>51</sup> The concept is old: there are a number of interesting stories from late Vedic texts onward that tell how to deal with 'hot' items or persons, such as the magically powerful 'hot' *Ṛṣis* --- one sends a divine courtesan (*Apsaras*) to 'cool them down'.

If we combine this information with the Indian idea of a power rising up one's spine in Yoga, we detect very old pathway dependencies in Indian thought. For, the ancestors of the Andamanese are some of the earliest settlers in the subcontinent, soon after the Out of Africa movement of some 65,000 years ago. The similarity with African (San) concepts notable: that of how to manage – with difficulty and after a

long period of training by other shamans -- the heat rising up one's spine. It is remarkable that the San and Sandawe still live(d) close to the area of origin of the Out of Africa emigrants, in Central Tanzania. It seems that these populations all have retained *early* forms of shamanism.

### *3. Australian shamans*

Australian shamans<sup>52</sup> (*karadji, maban*), are usually called 'clever men'. Like their Andamanese counterparts, they undergo symbolic death and descent into a cave or ascent to heaven. Like the San shamans they do so, however, by riding on the Rainbow Snake.<sup>53</sup> In their transformation to shamans, their internal organs are removed and a new set is inserted consisting of stones or of small rainbow snakes and crystals.<sup>54</sup> This procedure symbolizes their transformation of consciousness; the fractured crystals with their multi-colored, rainbow-like like=?, evoke the primordial Rainbow Serpent. Certain spirits, familiars or personal totems, sometimes located inside the body, act as assistants. They can be pulled out and can travel.<sup>55</sup> The following procedures are most typical.

(1) Symbolic death and ascent to heaven;<sup>56</sup> the shamanic master changes into a skeleton, puts the shrunk candidate (of the size of a newborn) in his pouch on his neck, rides, astride the Rainbow Snake, climbs upward and throws the candidate into heaven, thereby killing him. (2) In heaven, he inserts small rainbow snakes and crystals into him; he brings him back to earth on the Rainbow Snake; again, crystals are inserted. (3) Finally, he awakens the candidate by touch with a magical stone.

Among the various local variations, the Aranda<sup>57</sup> of Central Australia, too, insert magic crystals;<sup>58</sup> a spirit throws an invisible lance, from neck to tongue, producing a really visible hole, and from ear to ear; the candidate falls down dead; his internal organs are removed; a new set of stones is inserted; inside him there is a lizard of great power (or an eagle-hawk); the candidate returns to life as insane for a few days.<sup>59</sup> The Wiradjuri<sup>60</sup> of New South Wales, too, have the shaman master insert crystals into the body of the initiate, and then letting him drink water; he can see the

spirits now; the master leads him to his grave where the dead give him magical stones; he meets a snake, which becomes his totem; the snake leads him into the earth, where other snakes rub him, magically giving him powers; then, the master leads him upward to Baiame (the highest being sitting on a 'throne' of crystal); they ascend on a rope, until they meet the bird of Baiame and enter the door to heaven, which is quickly opening and closing.<sup>61</sup> If they are touched by the door, they fall down to earth.

### §5 Shamanic 'heat'

Perhaps most interestingly, the three remnant populations of the great exodus, the Bushmen, Andamanese and Australian Aborigines, talk of a power released as 'heat' that moved up the spine; as shamans, they have to learn to bring it under control.<sup>62</sup> There is agreement, from Africa to Australia, in spite of some differences in the actual shamanistic performance: communal dance with music with the San (and apparently the Sandawe)<sup>63</sup> or the more casual initiation of the Andamanese by visiting the forest, apparently without special dances. Once closer contact with the few hundred still-surviving Jarawa or Sentinelese has been established, we may know more.

On closer inspection, this image may well be one of the most original ones involving shamans: we have the 'external' movement of the shaman, whether in Siberia or in the southern regions, from the San to Australia. It takes the shaman to heaven along the (world) tree or along a certain path, led by a dog or raven, or on the Rainbow Snake. The same is seen internalized as the upward movement of internal heat, from the lower part of the spine --- functioning as an internal 'tree' --- upward to the top, the skull, which is shaped like the dome of the sky.<sup>64</sup>

If we add Indian yogic materials to these data, heat is generated at the lower end of the spine, in the *guhya* region, between penis and anus. It moves upward through several centers (*cakra*), to the head, and through an imagined hole in the skull (*brahmarandha*) to a final *cakra* above the head. The movement of yogic power is

often described in Indian texts as the ‘awakening of the snake’, of *kuṇḍalinī* power coiled at the bottom of the spine, which reminds one of the Rainbow Snake inside the Australian shaman’s body. The movement is hinted at already in Patañjali’s *Yogasūtra*, chapter 3, ‘On divine powers’, which mentions the navel, throat, chest, head and heart.<sup>65</sup> That clearly reminds one of shamanic practices elsewhere.

It is important to note that Yoga is not an original Indo-Iranian practice but obviously something that was gradually acquired locally by Indo-Aryan speakers, indicating the ‘primitive’ --- or rather ‘perennial’ --- origins of some forms of Indian (*kuṇḍalinī*) yoga. Nothing is really new or unique here. This form of yoga is merely the preservation --- and subsequent practical and theoretical elaboration in medieval India --- of some Stone-Age spiritual techniques found from Africa to Australia, and hence, ‘left behind’ during this expansion, also in the Indian subcontinent and the Andamans.<sup>66</sup> The Andamanese and Australians practicing early shamanism involving inner heat still live on the Out of Africa trail, a movement occurring some 65,000 years ago.<sup>67</sup>

In sum, we are dealing here with a very ancient form of shamanism that has undergone some local developments over the past 65,000 years or so but still is remarkably consistent in its forms: the shamans go into trance through contact with the spirits, they manage ‘heat’ rising up from the lower spine, somatically, they move upwards to heaven spiritually (and downwards to the netherworld); they use the powers gained in contact with the spirits for healing and enhancing the hunt.

Against this background, ‘classical’ Siberian shamanism is a later, a Late Paleolithic or rather a Mesolithic, development. In terms of the comparative mythology now proposed,<sup>68</sup> ‘Siberian’ shamanism belongs to one of the northern (Laurasian) groups of people found in Eurasia and the Americas, while the older, southern groups (of Gondwana Land) have preserved the older, more original forms of shamanism to this day. Their study is of high urgency as they represent the common heritage of humankind.

## §6 Summary of older shamanic traditions

The following section sums up the salient features of shamanism; details assumed for Siberian shamanism are not specifically recorded, except for some data of Eskimo (Inuit) and eastern Siberians; southern shamanic groups are underlined.

### *Initiation*

(a) Summons in solitude from spirits of wilderness: Andaman (also epileptic fits, fainting).

(b) Together with songs: San (Bushmen), also with dance, musical instruments; Eskimo; Tungus: ‘when I sing, [illness] disappears’.

(c) illness or death, if not heeded: Bushmen: prolonged initiation, managing of heat; Tungus: ‘sick for one year’

(d) Spiritual ‘familiar’ involved with call. Bushmen: role of springboks (flying bucks, ‘former humans’, changed by mantis; blood exchange with shaman); Andaman: spirits of jungle, initiate in jungle; Australia: personal totem (rainbow snake, lizard, eagle hawk) inserted inside body, pulled out for healing and travel; Eskimo: ‘human’ helpers; Tungus: ‘forefathers forced me...’.

(e) Inward physical transubstantiation. Bushmen: difficult control of *ntum* force inside, moves up spinal column = moving upwards to heaven on Rainbow Snake/spin webs; as flying springboks (also after death);<sup>69</sup> no shamanic death and dissection, reconstitution, but trance collapse; gradually learning to manage heat; Andaman: *oko-jumu* ‘dreamers,’ by dying and returning to life, by spirits in jungle; contact with heat / power *ot-kimil*; Semang (Malaya): inserting small crystals into body; Papua: shaman is ‘burning’; Australia: symbolic death and ascent to heaven (or underground), on Rainbow Snake into heaven, killing adept; inserting small rainbow snakes and crystals (snake/eagle hawk becomes totem, inside the body); return on Rainbow Snake, awakening; Eskimo: ‘eaten by bear, limb by limb’, fasting, sexual abstinence, isolation, no warmth; Tungus: adept shot, cut up, bones separated; spirits eat his flesh; shaman spirits drink blood of reindeer, also the adept; ancestors give up

his body, he begins to shamanize; transvestite Shamans: Chukchi/Koryak: androgynous; elsewhere ‘soft men’.

Learning period with other shamans. Bushmen: older experienced medicine men control *ntum*, call ‘traveling’ adept back into his body; Andaman: only sketchy information on teachers; Australia: important role of master shaman; Siberia: *ditto*.

Powers: Bushmen: power/heat *ntum*, controlled by medicine inside the body; Andaman: power in all ‘hot’ objects: *ot-kimil*; danger due to contact; Semang: quartz crystals inserted into body; Australia: power by inserting quartz crystals; due to fractures, shine similar to rainbow snake); Eskimo: *sila* ‘soul’/*silam inua* ‘soul of the universe’, invisible; distant, but also inside oneself.

(f) Sees/moves through barriers/space: Bushmen: moves down, then up to heaven on Rainbow Snake or by spiders’ silk strings / as flying springboks; Andaman: nothing recorded, just contact with spirits in jungle; Australia: inside the body is a lizard/rainbow snake of great power, with other tribes (SE) an eagle-hawk; important role of the tree in ritual<sup>70</sup> shaman moves down and up with help of animals; also by ladder/rope; Siberia: upward movement along world tree or a path: dog guide, like Saramā (in the Veda).

(g) Mediate between humans and supernatural: Andaman: participatory, by contact with power and healing etc; Australia: by traveling in trance (helped by familiar); Chukchi/Koryak: intervening with anthropomorphic sky gods, and anthropomorphic enemy spirits intercepting sacrifices.

(h) Advise/guide in hunting: Tungus: ancestors help in hunting; hunting help widespread (Africa, Asia, Australia).

(i) Healing: massage, suction, flight to its heavenly source; Bushmen: use of *ntum* power; Andaman: use of heat; also plants, objects; Papua: evil spirits expelled.

## §7 Stone-age shamanism and stone-age art

How old are the ‘Siberian’ and ‘southern’ versions of shamanism? As indicated, ‘classical’ Eurasian shamanism is found among a wide range of ‘northern’ peoples,

from the Saami (Lapps) of Northern Scandinavia to the Chukchi in N.E. Siberia --- with an extension into all of the Americas --- and from the Polar Sea to some Nepalese tribes<sup>71</sup> and to the Dayak of Borneo.<sup>72</sup>

In the context of Eurasian mythology and Stone-Age shamanism, the questions of interest include the following ones. What is its relationship with the ‘shaman’ figure attested in Stone-Age paintings in southern France and elsewhere?<sup>73</sup> What is the relationship with similar features found among the San (Bushmen), the Andamanese and the Australian Aborigines?<sup>74</sup> Is shamanism related to the Stone-Age hunters’ societies of the open steppe/tundra of Eurasia, and in how far could it continue among agriculturalists, e.g. in modern Nepal or Okinawa?<sup>75</sup> What, then, are the stages in its development? How far is the institution of shamans (whether inherited via the family line or not) connected with the (possibility of) transmission of a compact *body of texts*, such as required by the complex Laurasian mythology? Is the absence of the Eurasian/Laurasian framework for shamanism --- even in areas where one would suspect it, such as Tierra del Fuego<sup>76</sup> --- connected with the absence of shamans/priests? Only some of these questions will be answered below. It is best to begin investigating what testimony can be found by archaeology, in other words: in Stone-Age rituals, paintings and sculptures<sup>77</sup> that we can ‘ask’ for their meanings. We have Stone-Age objects, plastic art and cave paintings from the Paleolithic period, --- that is, in Europe before c. 8000 BCE, for example at Lascaux. Shamanic practices have been assumed for the Paleolithic<sup>78</sup> and for the Neolithic periods,<sup>79</sup> for which good archaeological evidence exists.<sup>80</sup> However, early rock art mostly depicts, not surprisingly, the local animals of the Stone-Age hunt and, from the Mesolithic onwards, also humans in the act of hunting, dance, daily life and war. We also find some composite human figures, spirits or deities (especially in Australian art). Importantly, there are some early paintings, such as at Lascaux, with depictions of a figure that has been interpreted as shaman or ‘sorcerer’, who is involved in the magic of the hunt.<sup>81</sup> It was such ‘shamans’ that will have transmitted Stone-Age myths. The ‘classical’ Siberian form of shamanism, with offshoots in northern Europe, South and



Southeast Asia as well as Korea, Japan and the Americas,<sup>82</sup> has some additional characteristics, such as the circular frame drum. The raven frequently is the shaman's messenger.<sup>83</sup> The shamanic explanation of Stone-Age paintings has been challenged recently. Wunn (2005) insists that the various kinds of archaeological data have to be counterchecked.<sup>84</sup> Three recent prominent interpretations, those of Henri Breuil,<sup>85</sup> André Leroi-Gourhan<sup>86</sup> and Mircea Eliade, are largely rejected by her.<sup>87</sup>

Eliade<sup>88</sup> saw parallels to Paleolithic art in the simple hunters' economies that allow for hunting magic and for a 'sanctuary', but, as Wunn criticizes, he used only one painting to illustrate this art: Breuil's much discussed and now criticized sketch of a painting at Trois Frères:<sup>89</sup> that of the shaman-like 'Great Sorcerer', of c. 14,000 BCE.<sup>90</sup> Similarly, the famous Lascaux painting of an ithyphallic man lying in front of bison<sup>91</sup> has found various interpretations: as hunting magic, as the memorial of a wounded or slain hunter,<sup>92</sup> or as a shamanistic séance.<sup>93</sup>

To these representations, we can add a number of significant depictions of the European Upper Paleolithic:<sup>94</sup> the Magdalenien figure at El Castillo, 'of a shaman going into trance --- becoming "geometric" and sensing his body split into two different energy fields on his left and right side.' Second, a figure at Bruniquel usually called the 'Button Man'.<sup>95</sup> However, as J. Harrod pointed out to me, the figure 'has six or seven buttons --- note the buttons are not full circles but two arcs put together; this appears to be a representation paralleling the Hindu *cakra* model'. And importantly, a figure from Predmosti, with several *cakras* on top of each other, the one in the breast area with two adjoined ones (left and right), for which compare the careful and thoughtful description by A. Marshak.<sup>96</sup>

Since the Seventies ethnographic comparison has been more prominent in the interpretations. Based on (European) archaeological evidence and a theory of linear mental development (Bellah),<sup>97</sup> Wunn concludes that, in the Late Paleolithic neither sorcerers nor shamans were depicted, nor were clashes between totemistic clans.<sup>98</sup> However, I think that even a mere table of the congruencies, identities and overlaps of cave art and modern shamanic practices will show the opposite: the Paleolithic cave

paintings indicate an early form of shamanism that is still maintained with the San, Andamanese, Semang of Malaya, the Papuas and Australian Aborigines. These are populations that, in my scheme of comparative mythology (2001, 2010), belong to the ‘older’, Gondwana type (of c. 65,000 years ago), from which Eurasian and Amerindian mythology (of the Laurasian type) developed around 40,000 years ago.

### **§8 Modern and stone-age shamanism**

It appears that there are a number of seemingly global characteristics that unite San, Andamanese, Australian and Eurasian/Amerindian shamanism. Some aspects of these characteristics are already clearly, some others likely, represented in Stone-Age rock art: death and rebirth / change inside the body(?); use of animal familiars (bison, bird); trance: descent / ascent to the spirits or deities (using a bird); contact with and use of supermundane powers for healing and success in hunting (hunting magic); management of heat in the spinal cord (Paleolithic?); shape shifting / animal costume (with the San after death); dance and music (by bow, and ‘musical spots’ in caves); transmitting such knowledge in songs and tales (early mythologies).

This congruence seems to reflect an older stage of shamanism. Importantly, several of the key shamanistic features --- new body, ascent to the deities as a bird, dance, contact with powers, and connection with hunting magic<sup>99</sup> --- are seen already in Crô Magnon paintings.<sup>100</sup> These are archaeologically datable, at least, to the later part of the Upper Paleolithic, from c. 27,000--14,000 BCE. Further, some important features, such as shamanistic dance, animal costume or shape shifting, hunting magic, communication with spirits and the transmission of tales present in reconstructed Stone-Age mythology (Gondwana and Laurasian) fit quite well into early hunter societies’ conceptions of shamanic power. They include items such as the shaman’s death and rebirth during initiation, the (parallel) rebirth of animals killed in hunting, his ascent to heaven and return to earth.

This form of early reconstructed shamanism has subsequently been further adapted<sup>101</sup> along the lines seen in its Andaman and Australian forms (i.e. physical

changes in the body of the shaman); development of the animal costume, as it is seen in the Late Paleolithic (France, etc.), in Siberia and the Americas; and the development from simple music (clapping, bowstring) to Siberian drumming.

In addition, some mythemes underlying shamanism also appear prominently in Gondwana and Laurasian myths, such as ascent, rebirth during initiation, as well as rebirth of an animal killed in the hunt or in sacrifice. Based on these shared global characteristics, we can conclude that Paleolithic shamanism was an archaic form of religion, less complex than that later on developed into ‘classical’ Siberian shamanism and its offshoots in Eurasia and the Americas.

The reconstructed mythology (Gondwana and Laurasia)<sup>102</sup> of 65,000 years ago disallows a late spread, and the many congruities within the fixed structure (of Laurasian mythology, c. 40,000 years ago) disallow independent development. The same holds for early cave art. Rather, the shared characteristics of early shamanic practices have been of significant importance for the formation of Eurasian mythology, its composition and transmission across the millennia. As discussed, the initiation of a shaman usually includes formal initiation, which is secretive in Siberia and is prominent and prolonged in San society.<sup>103</sup> The teachings of one or several experienced shamans ensure the transmission of oral tales, beliefs and practices that are typical for the local form of shamanism. The importance of shamans as storytellers or singers may also derive from the belief that a person who is able to memorize long texts or songs and play an instrument did so by contact with the spirits.<sup>104</sup> Schärer estimated some 15,000 pages for Borneo Dayak lore.

In the Laurasian context, these teachings and their content are highly formalized, as the development of the Laurasian story line<sup>105</sup> indicates. The very storyline may even have been intended and used as a teaching device. Initiates could learn the many facets of shamanic lore by following its sequential temporal arrangement. The shamanic teachers’ texts rely on the effectiveness of sacred, frequently archaic speech.<sup>106</sup> They have served as the main conduit for the preservation of ancient myths and have ensured a certain amount of stability for

them.<sup>107</sup> In that sense, Laurasian mythology constitutes our ‘grandfather’s and father’s tales’.

Importantly, formalized transmission also favored the emergence and retention of the *very structure* of Laurasian mythology: myths are, as all oral texts, more easily learned by heart and transmitted in little changed form if they are organized according to a certain fixed pattern.<sup>108</sup> In the present case, it is the simple narrative structure from creation to destruction of the world, the Laurasian storyline. It represents not only the ‘life story’ of the universe paralleling that of humans but also that of hunted and killed animals, along with their expected rebirth --- that is, if their bones were preserved intact. Importantly, these beliefs mirror those about shamanic death and rebirth in initiation as well.

In short, Laurasian mythology is the outcome of an ancient hunter ideology marked by shamanism. It must go back all the way to that of the Upper Paleolithic shamans and to their teachings that were continuously transmitted to their disciples. It is structured and based on the life-cycle of their prey: killed and reborn animals. This process is seen as paralleling that of the fate of humans --- as well as that of the reconstituted and reborn shaman --- and of the world at large. These structures would include the divine figure of a Lord (or Lady) of the animals who is prominently found in many later mythologies across Laurasia.

### **Witzel-notes-reworked**

<sup>1</sup>1. Eliade, definition (1964: 3--7); Hamayon (1990). See now the encyclopedic volumes by Walter and Neumann Fridman (2004). --- For Eurasian shamanism (and Greek myths) see (below): Burkert (1982 [1979]: 88 sqq.); Ōbayashi (1991); Oppitz (1991) with a detailed study of Magar shamanism; Vitebski (1995); and Maskarinec (1995) for the neighboring area of Central Nepal. --- A history of the study of Shamanism (by R. Hamayon 2004) .

<sup>1</sup> 2. See Walter and Fridman 2004; XIX.

<sup>1</sup> 3. Kehoe (2000) criticizes Mircea Eliade's work. --- Hoppál (2007); (cf. Hoppál (2006: 9--25); instead, he recommends the term 'shamanhood' or 'shamanship' so as to stress the diversity of shamanism: it is not a religion, nor a set of dogmas, but linked to the everyday life in a practical way. --- Piers Vitebsky holds that despite astonishing similarities, there is no unity in shamanism. Pure shamanistic societies do not exist now (although they *may* have in the past).

<sup>1</sup> 4. Eliade (1946: 5--52); Eliade (1954); Eliade (1989 [1951]); Walter and Neumann Fridman (2004), include the article by M. Winkelman. Cross-cultural perspectives on shamans, pp. 61--70, follows the common pattern of an altered state of consciousness, initiation, healing, etc.; it includes a scheme of transformation from hunter-gatherer shamans to sorcerers/witches, mediums and priests in agricultural and state societies (Winkelman, 2004: 67--68; Winkelman 1990), cf. the discussion, below. For Eurasian shamanism (and Greek myths) see Burkert (1982 [1979]: 88 sqq.); Ōbayashi (1991); Oppitz (1991) with a detailed study of Magar shamanism; Vitebski (1995); Maskarinec (1995) for the neighboring area of Central Nepal. --- A history of the study of Shamanism (by R. Hamayon) is given in Walter and Fridman (2004: 142--7).

<sup>1</sup> 5. Eliade (1989 [1951]); Hamayon (1990). Recent updates are found in Walter and Fridman (2004), Campbell (1988, I 73 sqq., 90 sqq., 2: 156 sqq.; 1988, II , 1, 2; 1989 [1983] 3; Mastromattei and Rigopulos (1999); and notably in the encyclopedic collection edited by Walter and Fridman (2004). Early Chinese forms have been studied by Chang (1983); early Indian ones in the *Ṛgveda* by Oguibenine (1968: 149--50; Meisig (1995); Filippi (1999); Torcinovich (1999); Thompson (2003).

<sup>1</sup> 6. However, shamans can also gather in associations.

<sup>1</sup> 7. Walter and Fridman 2004: XVII sqq., especially XXI sq.

<sup>1</sup> 8. Note the neurobiological critique by Winkelman (1990) and in Walter and Fridman (2004: 187 sqq.).

<sup>1</sup> 9. In late May 2009, I had the chance to talk to two well known Okinawa shamans on Miyako island, Sadoyama Anko and Nema Tsuruko. The interviews reconfirmed many “Siberian” concepts (such as initiatory crisis, flight with wings, contact with the spirits (*kami*) in heaven, etc.) shared by these modern practitioners.

<sup>1</sup> 10. See Walter and Fridman (2004: XIX).

<sup>1</sup> 11. See for example the typical traits of Yamana (Tierra del Fuego) initiation of shamans (Eliade 1954: 63, following Gusinde 1931-).

<sup>1</sup> 12. Eliade 1954: 60 sq. He excludes a discussion of African shamanism (Eliade 1954: 357), awaiting better materials.

<sup>1</sup> 13. Eliade (1954: 61). See also Oppitz (1991: 174 sqq).

<sup>1</sup> 14. Eliade (1954: 62).

<sup>1</sup> 15. Eliade (1954: 62). In the light of recent work by Y. Berezkin (2002), South America may preserve some archaic data that otherwise are found only in New Guinea and Australia, while North America has subsequently been heavily influenced from Siberia. If so, the trait of inserted crystals would have been brought in already around 20 kya.

<sup>1</sup> 16. Eliade (1954: 60). However, Joseph Campbell’s characterization of the shamanism of the Australian Aborigines is misleading. He distinguishes, erroneously, between primitive (Eskimo), deteriorated (Australian), San (Bushmen), and post-Paleolithic Siberian shamanism. Such distinctions are based on the Siberian model and need to be redefined. Campbell regards the Australian form of Shamanism as ‘degraded’. I cannot detect such a thing. In contrast, the elements of learning from older shamans and of gradually managing the powers released/contacted are present in all these ‘Southern’ forms.

<sup>1</sup> 17. A typical shamanic frame drum is attested in Sumerian finds of c. 2000 BCE, with the Hittites and Egyptians (c. 950--730 BCE), see Walter and Fridman (2004: 101 sqq.), and note Witzel (2003), on the Central Asian and Indus versions: these are depicted on seals of the Bactria-Margiana Archaeological Complex c. 2000 BCE; a similar scene is found in the contemporary Indus Civilization.

<sup>1</sup> 18. This may be connected with the climbing of the (world) tree during the initiation of a shaman; for illustrations see Oppitz (1991: 375); Campbell (1988, I,2: 159) (Mapuche in C. Chile). The concept is retained in the solemn Vedic Vājapeya ritual, where husband and wife have to climb a tall pole and sit on a wheel mounted there (which is a symbol of the turning of the sun and nighttime sky cf. Witzel, 1984), while they are pelted with salt bags.

<sup>1</sup> 19. Cf. Eliade (1954: 356).

<sup>1</sup> 20. Eliade (1954: 438 sqq.); cf. Campbell (1988, I, 2: 165).

<sup>1</sup> 21. Basilov 1999: 39.

<sup>1</sup> 22. Cf. Walter and Fridman 2004: Introduction, XXI.

Basilov defines a (Siberian) shaman as follows: ‘the peculiarities that distinguish a shaman ... are

(a) he can perform his functions with the assistance of his helping spirits only;

(b) he is chosen, brought up, ‘recreated’ and educated by the spirits themselves; as a result, he possesses some supernatural qualities and knowledge;

(c) he is able to penetrate into the other worlds in order to communicate with the gods and spirits;

(d) the shaman’s contact with the gods and spirits presupposes a state of ecstasy as a form of ritual behavior;

(e) the main ritual object of a shaman is an incarnation of his guardian spirit (or helping spirit) or his double (external) soul in animal form; this object is firmly connected with a shaman's personal professional qualities and his life.

The classical definition by Shirokogoroff (1935) for Tungus shamans is similar, if more concise:

(1) A shaman is a master of spirits, who has

(2) mastered a group of spirits;

(3) a shaman commands a recognized array of techniques and paraphernalia that have been transmitted from elders;

(4) s/he possesses a theoretical justification for the shamanistic process;

(5) the shaman occupies a special position.

Note Maskarinec in Walter and Fridman (2004: 767); F. Smith in alter and Fridman (2004: 78.

<sup>1</sup> 23. Linguistically attested at least since Nostratic times, see Illich-Switych (1971) sqq., that means since well before 10,000 BCE or much earlier, which is indeed required by the deep time depth of one of its members, Afrasian, see Ehret (1995).

<sup>1</sup> 24. Such as with the Andamanese and the Tapirape (S. America).

<sup>1</sup> 25. In North American Amerindians seek this through a "vision quest". The South American Shuar become shamans to defend themselves.

<sup>1</sup> 26. Note that some scholars regard this worldview as 'a body-based' cosmology; some of its aspects, such as soul flight, then, is a symbolism based on the experiences of dreams. Shamanism could then be a symbolic system that even predates language; cf. Walter and Fridman (2004: 188).

<sup>1</sup> 27. For example with the Siberian Yakuts, Dolgans, Evenks (Hoppál 2006: 149).

<sup>1</sup> 28. Even today, this ancient practice of healing is still seen in the caduceus as the symbol of medicine.

<sup>1</sup> 29. Or that of an unborn child to heal infertility in women (Hoppál 2006: 27).

<sup>1</sup> 30. Such practices are presumably very ancient; in about 368 BCE, Plato wrote in the *Phaedrus*.

<sup>1</sup> 31. However, as per Joseph Campbell (1987 [1969]: 231).

<sup>1</sup> 32. To be distinguished from (involuntary) spirit possession, which is more typical for Africa, and parts of India; see discussion in see Walter and Fridman (2004: 228--34); cf. Winkelmann (2004: 61 sqq.), and *passim* on various African populations.

<sup>1</sup> 33. Often of prepubescent girls, as also seen in western societies.

<sup>1</sup> 34. Possession, occurring worldwide, therefore has thus nothing to do with shamanism as commonly defined, though some of the outwardly visible aspects may



overlap, such as trembling. For example, in Nepal and North India, it is usually women who are possessed (often as an involuntary sign of social protest). They are then called ‘witches’ (Nepali *boksi*) and are exorcised ... by shamans (*jhankri*).

<sup>1</sup> 35. Turner (1995).

<sup>1</sup> 36. There is a detailed case history of Chuonnasuan, the last master shaman among the Tungus (Oroqen) of Northeast China, see Noll and Shi, (2004).

<sup>1</sup> 37. A ‘holy man’ *wicasa wakan*, ‘medicine man’ or ‘shaman’, is called *pejuta wacasa*. A dream or vision of birds turns one into a medicine man, but the vision of the *wakinyan Thunderbird* turns one into a *heyoka*. Both the Thunderbird and the *heyoka* are feared and revered.

<sup>1</sup> 38. This is commonly found in Eastern Siberia and in North America, which suggests an ancient (Eurasian) origin. Shamans incorporating two spirits are regarded as especially powerful and respected: among the Chukchi, the S.E. Asian Sea Dayak as well as among Arapaho, Cheyenne, Navajo, Pawnee, Lakota, Ute, Patagonians, Araucanians, and many other Amerindian tribes. Cf. Campbell (1988--89, I, 2: 174), map. See also the maps in Baumann (1986 [1955]). However, duality and bisexuality are also found among the shamans of the Dogon people (Burkina Faso), see works of the writer Malidoma Somé, who was born and initiated there..

<sup>1</sup> 39. Cf. Harvey (2003).

<sup>1</sup> 40. See Witzel (2010).

<sup>1</sup> 41. Walter and Fridman (2004: 24).

<sup>1</sup> 42. Walter and Fridman (2004: 893).

<sup>1</sup> 43. Walter and Fridman 2004: 893.

<sup>1</sup> 44. Walter and Fridman 2005: 219--20; 981--94; Connah (2004: 30 sq.); Campbell (1988, I, 1: 94). Narby and Huxley (2001: 131--4), with a description of !Kung shamanism and dancing by Lorna Marshall; virtually all men can act as healers.

<sup>1</sup> 45. Walter and Fridman (2004: 24).

<sup>1</sup> 46. As mentioned this is a body-based cosmology, and soul flight, could be a symbolism that presents the experiences of dreams; cf. Walter and Fridman (2004: 188).

<sup>1</sup> 47. Lewis-Williams (1993, 2002), though archaeologists hold that the San moved into South Africa from the north only after c. 6000 BCE, most probably from Tanzania, where their distant linguistic relatives, the Hadza and Sandawe, have shamanic curing rituals with trances, or the lion possession dance. The South African San in the 19<sup>th</sup> century practiced shamanism: Eastern Free State and Lesotho local folklore described them having lived in caves, where they drew pictures on cave walls *during a trance*; they were also good rain makers. This rock and plastic art nevertheless shows a continuous tradition since the Upper Paleolithic. See however, the critique of David Lewis-Williams for projecting 'shamanism' onto Khoisan tales and rites, by Anne Solomon (2008) (kindly pointed out to me by James Harrod, letter of 17 Jan. 2010).

<sup>1</sup> 48. Campbell (1988, I, 1: 118 sqq.); Radcliffe-Brown (1964 [1906]).

<sup>1</sup> 49. With the Aka-bea tribe: *oko-paiad*, or *taraba* 'dream'; there is no clear distinction between words.

<sup>1</sup> 50. Campbell (1988), however, does not discern trance, and hence no shamans.

<sup>1</sup> 51. Abbott (1984).

<sup>1</sup> 52. The term 'shaman' is not frequently used for them in the literature; instead 'medicine man', 'clever man', 'man of high degree', etc. Some scholars do not regard them as shamans since some aspects of *Siberian Shamanism* are missing; some women also act as shamans. See Hume (2004); Eliade (1954 [1951]: 135).

<sup>1</sup> 53. A similar concept is found with the Mayas: the vision serpent (and the double-headed serpent bat) are a path of communication between the two worlds (earth and the Otherworld, see Walter and Fridman, 2004: 20)

<sup>1</sup> 54. Detailed discussion in Eliade (1954: 54 sqq.); cf. quotes in Lawlor (1991: 374).

<sup>1</sup> 55. In Northern Kimberley area, the incipient shaman is swallowed by the Rainbow Snake or scum from the snake's pool is inserted (as snake egg) into his navel and grows inside him.

<sup>1</sup> 56. Eliade (1954: 135).

<sup>1</sup> 57. Campbell (1988, I, 2: 169).

<sup>1</sup> 58. Lawlor (1991: 374).

<sup>1</sup> 59. Other, lower-level shamans, are taken *underground* by a spirit:

-- small crystals of other shamans are put into a spear thrower: they are placed/pushed along from the front of the legs upwards to the breast bone, scouring him three times; they are described as 'pressed into his body', then further into his head, then into his arms;

-- a pointed stick is inserted under the nail of the middle right finger; this is repeated; then the tongue pierced,

-- the body is painted;

-- finally, the adept returns.

<sup>1</sup> 60. Eliade (1954: 139-). It must be noted that the S.E. Australian mythology differs considerably from that of the rest of the continent in having an All-Father being, perhaps due to former occupation by Tasmanians; as for shamanism, the role of a bird is stressed; cf. Witzel (2010).

<sup>1</sup> 61. Like the seam of the sky in the old Indian text *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 3.9, and like the Ainu heaven.

<sup>1</sup> 62. Eliade (1954: 356) on shamanistic heat in general.

<sup>1</sup> 63. Dempwolff 1916).

<sup>1</sup> 64. Cf. the representations in European Paleolithic art, at El Castillo, Bruniquel and Predmosti (see below).

<sup>1</sup> 65. Yogasūtra 3.28 (By self-control on the navel arises knowledge of the constitution of the body. 3.29 By self-control on the pit of the throat one subdues hunger and thirst. 3.30 By self-control on the tube within the chest one acquires absolute steadiness. 3.31 By self-control on the light in the head one envisions

perfected beings. 3.33. Self-control on the heart brings knowledge of the mental entity. See the standard translation by Woods (1914). Translation by BonGiovanni available at: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/yogasutr.htm>; <http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/ysp/ysp06.htm>. However, there also are a number of ‘powers’ (*siddhi*) that arise from meditation such as: levitation, walking on water, distant hearing, passing through space, becoming as tiny as an atom: Yogasūtra 3.38 ‘By self-control of the nerve-currents utilizing the lifebreath, one may levitate, walk on water, swamps, thorns, or the like. 3.39 By self-control over the maintenance of breath, one may radiate light. 3.40 By self-control on the relation of the ear to the ether one gains distant hearing. 3.41 By self-control over the relation of the body to the ether, and maintaining at the same time the thought of the lightness of cotton, one is able to pass through space. 3.42 By self-control on the mind when it is separated from the body --- the state known as the Great Transcorporeal --- all coverings are removed from the Light. 3.43 Mastery over the elements arises when their gross and subtle forms, as well as their essential characteristics, and the inherent attributes and experiences they produce, is examined in self-control. 3.44 Thereby one may become as tiny as an atom as well as having many other abilities, such as perfection of the body, and non-resistance to duty.’ --- It is however cautioned in Yogasūtra 3.50 that ‘visits by invisible beings’ detract from the path. The *siddhi* powers gained by yoga, such as ‘flying’, etc. (rather, hopping) in Transcendental Meditation, must be *brought under control* in classical Yoga (Yogasūtra 3), as they are regarded as distractions from the aim, the achievement of mental equilibrium (*samādhi*). On the other hand, shamans of all shades actually believe to fly upwards/downwards (BonGiovanni).

<sup>1</sup> 66. The medieval and modern Indian end-product, the classical Indian Yoga, however, is very different from classical northern and southern shamanism: not just socially, as has already been mentioned, but also in its very nature: shamanism usually is ‘ecstatic’, while Yoga normally is the opposite, it is ‘enstatic’ (Langen, 1963), some forms of left-handed Tantra obviously excluded.

<sup>1</sup> 67. The San (Bushmen), for their part, must have come from much farther north, where the Hadza and Sandawe still live, or even from the then verdant Sahara.

<sup>1</sup> Witzel (2001); see now Witzel (2010).

<sup>1</sup> 69. The concept of a Rainbow Snake is widespread in Gondwana areas. It may be very old, and of Pan-Gaeon origin, see Witzel (2010).

<sup>1</sup> 70. For South Australia see the illustration in Ramsey Smith (1996 [1930]: 175); for the Arunta tribe, see Lawlor (1991: 75, and maybe 226, 361). Cf. the use of the double *tjurunga*.

<sup>1</sup> 71. Maskarinec (1998, 2004); Oppitz (1991).

<sup>1</sup> 72. Eliade (1954: 66).

<sup>1</sup> 73. See Walter and Fridman (2004: 16--25, 219--23); note the recently discovered Chauvet cave in the Ardèche region of France, of c. 33,000 BCE (which already has paintings with perspective, see Arnold (2003); Geneste (2005); Wunn (2005: 124); Lewis-Williams (2002).

<sup>1</sup> 74. Note especially the pointing sticks or horns, attached to heads, as seen in Lascaux, with Australians and Bushmen: Campbell (1988, I, 1: 66 n 106--7, 93 n 170); cf. also the Mediterranean '*corna*' gesture.

<sup>1</sup> 75. Walter and Fridman (2004: 747--50, 767--72, 775--8); Maskarinec (1998, 2004).

<sup>1</sup> 76. See Campbell (1988, I, 2), or, since the c. 1930, with the pagan Kalash of North West Pakistan.

<sup>1</sup> 77. For a short discussion see Burket (2001: 223--6).

<sup>1</sup> 78 Shamanism in cave art has been asserted by Dickson (1990); Mithen (1996); cf. various sites at: <http://www.bradshawfoundation.com/>.

<sup>1</sup> 79. Narr (2008).

<sup>1</sup> 80. In November 2008, a 12,000-year-old site in Israel was discovered, the earliest known shaman burials, of an elderly woman-- Among her grave goods were 50 complete tortoise shells, a human foot, a cow tail and eagle wings(!), remains of a

boar, leopard, and two martens. Apparently, there was a close relationship with animal spirits. See:

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/11/081105083721.htm>;

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2008/11/081104-israel-shaman-missions.html>.

and Grosman (2008) Another recent find is that of a woman in the Czech Republic, from the Upper Paleolithic; see Tedlock (2005).

<sup>1</sup> 81. Cf. Burkert (1979: 88 sqq.). For a detailed discussion, see Lewis-Williams (2002).

<sup>1</sup> 82. Walter and Friedman (2004).

<sup>1</sup> 83. Mortensen (2003).

<sup>1</sup> 84. Wunn (2005: 115, 2000).

<sup>1</sup> 85. Breuil, the pioneer of cave art studies, saw hunting and fertility magic in the Franco-Cantabrian cave paintings. However, his sketches and paintings have recently been criticized as incomplete, idealizing and idiosyncratic (Lorblanchet (2000: 81 sqq.); Wunn (2005: 122)). Most subsequent interpretations rest on his drawings, which continue to be used uncritically.

<sup>1</sup> 86. Leroi-Gourhan used a structural method, discovering an organized universe with a fixed 'syntax': all motifs are male/female symbols (Lorblanchet 2000: 83). Similarly, Annette Laming-Empeaire (1962) and Lorblanchet (2000: 83) rather see themes with a sexual background. Later on, Leroi-Gourhan shifted his interpretations to one of the cave as a sanctuary.

<sup>1</sup> 87. Wunn (2005: 116 sqq.); cf. Leonard and McClure (2004: 185 sq.).

<sup>1</sup> 88. Eliade (1978: 28).

<sup>1</sup> 89. Illustration in Campbell (1988, I, **part 1**: 76).

<sup>1</sup> 90. For depictions of such shaman-like figures see Campbell (1988, I, 1: 74, 78, and I, 2: 156); Gimbutas (1991: 176). Leonard and McClure (2004: 186) have a current photo of the 'sorcerer', juxtaposed to Breuil's sketch; the figure is attributed to 13,000 BCE. For another, still-older photo of c. 1960, see Langen (1963: 129).

<sup>1</sup> 91. Illustration in Campbell (1988, I, 1: 65).

<sup>1</sup> 92. Breuil (1952: 144--6); Maringer (1956: 130).

<sup>1</sup> 93. Kirchner (1952); Eliade (1954); Campbell (1987 [1969]: 310).

<sup>1</sup> 94. Kindly pointed out to me by James Harrod (letters of 9 Dec. 2009 and 17 Jan. 2010); see his website: <http://www.originsnet.org/>; cf. also <http://pleistocenecoalition.com/>).

<sup>1</sup> 95. Leroi-Gourhan (1967).

<sup>1</sup> 96. Marshak (1971).

<sup>1</sup> 97. Bellah (1964).

<sup>1</sup> 98. Wunn (2005, 2000) complains that, instead, incidental selection of motives, and old ideas of prehistoric religion prevail.

<sup>1</sup> 99. See Ōbayashi (1991).

<sup>1</sup> 100. Campbell (1988--89): 65, 74, 76.

<sup>1</sup> 101. Is the San/Sandawe version still closer to the original African version of shamanism?

<sup>1</sup> 102. Witzel (2010).

<sup>1</sup> 103. Walter and Fridman (2004: 893).

<sup>1</sup> 104. Hoppál (2006: 99).

<sup>1</sup> 105. Witzel (2001, 2010).

<sup>1</sup> 106. See examples with Indo-Europeans, or in Japan, or with the Taiwan Ami tribe; note also that any hunter's language is archaic; cf. also the Indian 'truth sorcery' (*satyakriyā*).

<sup>1</sup> 107. Cf. Maskarinec (1998, 2004: 766--72) for Central Nepal.

<sup>1</sup> 108. Various designs used by individual populations: medieval European and Tibetan 'memory palaces', Vedic India's mental designs to keep a fixed order of the 1028 hymns of their oldest text, the Ṛgveda, or the Polynesian method of using the skeleton of a fish, on whose bones certain data are 'stored' (see M. Witzel, 1996, available at: <http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~witzel/How-to-Enter.pdf>). The

Papuan and Andamanese (and S.E. Australian) way of counting, or rather tallying, is not very different from each other, see M. Witzel (2002).

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<sup>1</sup> 1. Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism, Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, Bollingen Series LXXVI, Pantheon Books, New York 1964, definition: p.3-7; Roberte Hamayon, *La chasse à l'âme : esquisse d'une théorie du chamanisme sibérien*.

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Nanterre : Société d'ethnologie, 1990. See now the encyclopedic volumes by Walter, Mariko Namba and Eva Jane Neumann Fridman. *Shamanism. An Encyclopedia of World Beliefs, Practices, and Culture*, Vol. I-II, ed. Mariko Namba Walter and Eva Jane Neumann Fridman. Santa Barbara CA, Denver, Oxford UK: ABC-CLIO, 2004. -- For Eurasian shamanism (and Greek myths) see (below): Burkert 1979: 88 sqq.; Ōbayashi 1991, Oppitz 1991 (with a detailed study of Magar shamanism), Vitebski 1995, and Maskarinec (1995) for the neighboring area of Central Nepal. -- A history of the study of Shamanism (by R. Hamayon) is given 2004:142-147.

<sup>2</sup> 2. See Walter and Fridman 2004; XIX.

<sup>3</sup> 3. Alice Kehoe. *Shamans and Religion: An Anthropological Exploration in Critical Thinking*, criticizes Mircea Eliade's work: -- Mihály Hoppál. *Shamans and traditions*. Budapest, Hungary : Akadémiai Kiadó 2007; (cf. Hoppál, "Sámánok, kultúrák és kutatók az ezredfordulón" [in Hungarian: "Shamans, cultures and researchers in the millenary"]. In Hoppál, Mihály & Szathmári, Botond & Takács, András. *Sámánok és kultúrák* ["Shamans and cultures"] Budapest: Gondolat 2006: 9–25; instead, he recommends the term "shamanhood" or "shamanship" as to stress the diversity of shamanism: it is not a religion, nor a set of dogmas, but linked to the everyday life in a practical way. --- Piers Vitebsky holds that despite astonishing similarities, there is no unity in shamanism. Pure shamanistic societies do not exist now (although they *may* have in the past).

<sup>4</sup> 4. Mircea Eliade "Le problème du chamanisme." *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 131 (1946): 5-52; ---, *Schamanismus und archaische Ekstasetechnik*. Zürich: Rascher, 1954 [= *Le chamanisme et les techniques archaïques de l'extase*. Paris: Payot, 1951; *Shamanism: archaic techniques of ecstasy*, translated from the French by Willard R. Trask. London, England: Arkana, 1989]; - Walter and Neumann Fridman 2004, include the article by M. Winkelman, *Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Shamans*, p. 61-70, follows the common pattern of an altered state of consciousness, initiation, healing, etc.; it includes a scheme of transformation from hunter-gatherer

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shamans to sorcerers/witches, mediums, and priests in agricultural and state societies (2004: 67-68, Winkelman 1990), cf. the discussion, below. For Eurasian shamanism (and Greek myths) see Walter Burkert. *Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual*. Berkeley: University of California Press: 1979, 1982: 88 sqq.; Taryō Ōbayashi The Shaman's Role in the Hunting Rituals of Northern Peoples." In *Hunting rituals of Northern peoples: 5<sup>th</sup> International Abashiri Symposium*, 1-10, ed. Hokkaido Museum of Northern Peoples. Abashiri: Association for Northern Cultural Promotion, 1991; Michael Oppitz. *Onkels Tochter, keine sonst: Heiratsbündnis und Denkweise in einer Lokalkultur des Himalaya*. Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1991 (with a detailed study of Magar shamanism); Pierce Vitebski. *The Shaman. Voyages of the soul. Trance, exstasy, and healing from Siberia to the Amazon*. London: DBP, Macmillan, 1995; Gregory Maskarinec. *The rulings of the night : an ethnography of Nepalese shaman oral texts*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995 for the neighboring area of Central Nepal. -- A history of the study of Shamanism (by R. Hamayon) is given in Walter and Fridman 2004:142-147.

<sup>5</sup> 5. Eliade 1951, Hamayon 1990. Recent updates are found in Walter & Fridman 2004, Joseph Campbell, *Historical Atlas of World Mythology. Vol. I. The way of the animal powers. Part 1: Mythologies of the primitive hunter and gatherers. Part 2: Mythologies of the great hunt*. New York: Harper & Row, 1988; Vol. II. *The way of the seeded earth. Part 1. The sacrifice*. 1988. Part 2. *Mythologies of the primitive planters: The Northern Americas*. 1988; Part 3. *Mythologies of the primitive planters: the middle and southern Americas*. 1989. [1983]: 1988: I.1: 73 sqq, 90 sqq; I 2; 156 sqq., Romano Mastromattei, Romano and Antonio Rigopoulos, eds. *Shamanic Cosmos - From India to the North Pole Star*. New Delhi: Venetian Academy of Indian Studies/D.K. Printworld, 1999, and notably in the encyclopedic collection edited by Walter and Fridman (2004). Early Chinese forms have been studied by K.C. Chang, *Art, Myth and Ritual. The Path to Political Authority in Ancient China*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1983; early Indian ones in the Ṛgveda by Boris



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Oguibenine, B. "Sur le symbolisme du type chamanique dans le Ṛgveda." In *Uchenyie Zapiski Tartuskogo Gosudarstvennogo universiteta* 201 (1968): 149-150; Marion Meisig. "Eine schamanistische Seance im Rgveda (RV 10.108)." *Mitteilungen für Anthropologie und Religionsgeschichte (MARG)* 10, (1995): 119-142; Filippi, Gian G. "The celestial ride." In Mastromattei & Rigopulos 1999: 73-87; Giovanni Torcinovich, "The horse and the journey to heaven of the Shamans and of the Vedic sacrificer." In: Mastromattei & Rigopulos 1999: 237-249; George Thompson. "Shamanism in the Ṛgveda and Its Central Asian Antecedents." Presentation at the 5<sup>th</sup> Harvard ESCA Round Table, May 9-12, 2003:

<http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~witzel/Thompson.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> 6. However, shamans can also gather in associations.

<sup>7</sup> 7. Walter and Fridman 2004: XVII sqq, especially XXI sq.

<sup>8</sup> 8. Note the neuro-biological critique by M. Winkelmann, "Shaman and Other 'Magico- Religious' Healers?: A Cross-Cultural Study of their Origins, Nature And Social Transformation." *Ethos* 18 (1990): 308-352, and in: Walter and Fridman 2004: 187sqq.

<sup>9</sup> 9. In late May 2009, I had the chance to talk to two well known Okinawa shamans on Miyako island, Sadoyama Anko and Nema Tsuruko. The interviews reconfirmed many "Siberian" concepts (such as initiatory crisis, flight with wings, contact with the spirits (*kami*) in heaven, etc.) shared by these modern practitioners.

<sup>10</sup> 10. See Walter and Fridman 2004; XIX.

<sup>11</sup> 11. See for example the typical traits of Yamana (Tierra del Fuego) initiation of shamans (Eliade 1954:63, following Gusinde 1931-).

<sup>12</sup> 12. Eliade 1954: 60sq. He excludes a discussion of African shamanism (Eliade 1954: 357), awaiting better materials.

<sup>13</sup> 13. Eliade 1954: 61. See also Oppitz 1991: 174 sqq.

<sup>14</sup> 14. Eliade 1954: 62.

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<sup>15</sup> 15. Eliade 1954: 62. In the light of recent work by Y. Berezkin, South America may preserve some archaic data that otherwise are found only in New Guinea and Australia, while North America has subsequently been heavily influenced from Siberia. If so, the trait of inserted crystals would have been brought in already around 20 kya.

<sup>16</sup> 16. Eliade 1954: 60. However, Joseph Campbell's characterization of the shamanism of the Australian Aborigines is misleading. He distinguishes, erroneously, between primitive (Eskimo), deteriorated (Australian), San (Bushmen), and post-Palaeolithic Siberian shamanism. Such distinctions are based on the Siberian model and need to be redefined. Campbell regards the Australian form of Shamanism as 'degraded.' I cannot detect such a thing. In contrast, the elements of learning from older shamans and of gradually managing the powers released/contacted are present in all these "Southern" forms.

<sup>17</sup> 17. A typical shamanic frame drum is attested in Sumerian finds of c. 2000 BCE, with the Hittites, and Egyptians (c. 950-730 BCE), see Walter and Fridman 2004: 101sq; and note M. Witzel, "Linguistic Evidence for Cultural Exchange in Prehistoric Western Central Asia." Philadelphia: Sino-Platonic Papers 129, 2003, on the Central Asian and Indus versions: these are depicted on seals of the Bactria-Margiana Archaeological Complex about 2000 BCE; a similar scene is found in the contemporary Indus Civilization.

<sup>18</sup> 18. This may be connected with the climbing of the (world) tree during the initiation of a shaman; for illustrations see Oppitz 1991: 375, Campbell 1988: I.2 159 (Mapuche in C. Chile); The concept is retained in the solemn Vedic Vājapeya ritual, where husband and wife have to climb a tall pole and sit on a wheel mounted there (which is a symbol of the turning of the sun and nighttime sky cf. Witzel 1984), while they are pelted with salt bags.

<sup>19</sup> 19. Cf. Eliade 1954: 356.

<sup>20</sup> 20. Eliade 1954: 438sq; cf. Campbell 1988: I 2: 165.

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<sup>21</sup> 21. Basilov 1999: 39.

<sup>22</sup> 22. Cf. Walter & Fridman 2005: Introduction, XXI.

Basilov defines a (Siberian) shaman as follows: “the peculiarities that distinguish a shaman ... are (a) he can perform his functions with the assistance of his helping spirits only; (b) he is chosen, brought up, 'recreated' and educated by the spirits themselves;<sup>22</sup> as a result, he possesses some supernatural qualities and knowledge, (c) he is able to penetrate into the other worlds in order to communicate with the gods and spirits;<sup>22</sup> (d) the shaman's contact with the gods and spirits presupposes a state of ecstasy as a form of ritual behavior; (e) the main ritual object of a shaman is an incarnation of his guardian spirit (or helping spirit) or his double (external) soul in animal form; this object is firmly connected with a shaman's personal professional qualities and his life.

The classical definition by Shirokogoroff (1935) for Tungus shamans is similar, if more concise:

(1) A shaman is a master of spirits, who has

(2) mastered a group of spirits;

(3) a shaman commands a recognized array of techniques and paraphernalia that have been transmitted from elders;

(4) s/he possesses a theoretical justification for the shamanistic process;

(5) the shaman occupies a special position.

Note G. Maskarinec in Walter & Fridman 2004: 767; F. Smith, *ditto*: 780.

<sup>23</sup> 23. Linguistically attested at least since Nostratic times, see Illich-Switych 1971 sqq., that means since well before 10,000 BCE or much earlier, which is indeed required by the deep time depth of one of its members, Afrasian, see Christopher Ehret, *Reconstructing Proto-Afroasiatic (Proto-Afrasian). Vowels, Tone, Consonants and Vocabulary*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

<sup>24</sup> 24. Such as with the Andamanese and the Tapirape (S. America).

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<sup>25</sup> 25. In North American Amerindians seek this through a "vision quest". The South American Shuar become shamans to defend themselves.

<sup>26</sup> 26. Note that some scholars regard this world view as 'a body-based' cosmology; some of its aspects, such as soul flight, then is a symbolism based on the experiences of dreams. Shamanism could then be a symbolic system that even predates language; cf. Walter and Fridman 2004: 188.

<sup>27</sup> 27. For example with the Siberian Yakuts, Dolgans, Evenks, Hoppál 2006: 149.

<sup>28</sup> 28. Even today, this ancient practice of healing is still seen in the caduceus as the symbol of medicine.

<sup>29</sup> 29. Or that of an unborn child to heal infertility in women, Hoppál 2006: 27.

<sup>30</sup> 30. Such practices are presumably very ancient; in about 368 BCE, Plato wrote in the *Phaedrus*.

<sup>31</sup> 31. However, as per Joseph Campbell. *Primitive mythology*. Harmondsworth UK, New York: Penguin 1987 [1969]: 231.

<sup>32</sup> 32. To be distinguished from (involuntary) spirit possession, which is more typical for Africa, and parts of India; see discussion in see Walter & Fridman 2004: 228-234; cf. Winkelman (2004: 61 sqq), and *passim* on various African populations.

<sup>33</sup> 33. Often of prepubescent girls, as also seen in western societies.

<sup>34</sup> 34. Possession, occurring worldwide, therefore has thus nothing to do with shamanism as commonly defined, though some of the outwardly visible aspects may overlap, such as trembling. For example, in Nepal and N. India, it is usually women who are possessed (often as an involuntary sign of social protest). They are then are called 'witches' (Nepali *boksi*) and are exorcised ... by shamans (*jhankri*).

<sup>35</sup> 35. Turner, Robert P. *et al.* Religious or Spiritual Problem. A Culturally Sensitive Diagnostic Category in the DSM-IV. *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, 183, No. 7, 1995, 435-444.

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<sup>36</sup> 36. There is a detailed case history of Chuonnasuan, the last master shaman among the Tungus (Oroqen) of Northeast China, see: Noll, Richard and Shi, Kun, Chuonnasuan (Meng Jin Fu), *The Last Shaman of the Oroqen of Northeast China*, *Journal of Korean Religions*, Seoul: Sōgang Taehakkyo. Chonggyo Yōn'guso 6: 135–162, 2004.

<sup>37</sup> 37. A 'Holy man' *wicasa wakan*, "Medicine man" or "shaman," is called *pejuta wacasa*. A dream or vision of birds turns one into a medicine man, but the vision of the *wakinyan Thunderbird* turns one into a *heyoka*. Both the Thunderbird and the *heyoka* are feared and revered.

<sup>38</sup> 38. This is commonly found in Eastern Siberia and in North America, which suggests an ancient (Eurasian) origin. Shamans incorporating two spirits are regarded as especially powerful and respected: among the Chukchi, the S.E. Asian Sea Dayak as well as among Arapaho, Cheyenne, Navajo, Pawnee, Lakota, Ute, Patagonians, Araucanians, and many other Amerindian tribes. Cf. Joseph Campbell, *The Historical Atlas of World Mythology* [Vol. I: *The Way of the Animal Powers*: Part 2:174], map. See also the maps in: Hermann Baumann. *Das doppelte Geschlecht*. Berlin: Reimer 1955; <sup>2</sup>1986. -- However, duality and bisexuality are also found among the shamans of the Dogon people (Burkina Faso), see works of the writer Malidoma Somé, who was born and initiated there (<http://www.malidoma.com/cms/>).

<sup>39</sup> 39. Cf. Graham Harvey. *Shamanism, A Reader*. London: Routledge, 2003.

<sup>40</sup> 40. See Witzel 2010.

<sup>41</sup> 41. Walter and Fridman 2004: 24.

<sup>42</sup> 42. Walter and Fridman 2004: 893.

<sup>43</sup> 43. Walter and Fridman 2005: 893.

<sup>44</sup> 44. Walter and Fridman 2005: 219-220; 981-994; Graham Connah.

*Forgotten Africa: an introduction to its archaeology*. London/New York: Routledge, 2004: 30 sq; Campbell 1988: I 1: 94. Jeremy Narby and Francis Huxley. *Shamans Through Time. 500 years on the path to knowledge*. London:

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Thames and Hudson, 2001: 131-134, with a description of !Kung shamanism and dancing by Lorna Marshall; virtually all men can act as healers.

<sup>45</sup> 45. Walter and Fridman 2004: 24.

<sup>46</sup> 46. As mentioned this is a body-based cosmology, and soul flight, could be a symbolism that presents the experiences of dreams; cf. Walter and Fridman 2004: 188.

<sup>47</sup> 47. J. David Lewis-Williams. "On Vision and Power in the Neolithic: Evidence from the Decorated Monuments." *Current Anthropology* 34 (1993): 55-65; and: *The Mind in the Cave. Consciousness and the Origins of Art*. London: Thames and Hudson, 2002 -- though archaeologists hold that the San moved into S. Africa from the north only after c. 6000 BCE, most probably from Tanzania, where their distant linguistic relatives, the Hadza and Sandawe, have shamanic curing rituals with trances, or the lion possession dance. The South African San in the 19th century practiced shamanism: Eastern Free State and Lesotho local folklore described them to have lived in caves, where they drew pictures on cave walls *during a trance*; they were also good rain makers. This rock and plastic art nevertheless shows a continuous tradition since the Upper Palaeolithic. -- See however, the critique of David Lewis-Williams for projecting 'shamanism' onto Khoisan tales and rites, by Anne Solomon, Myths, Making and Consciousness. Differences and Dynamics in San Rock Art. *Current Anthropology* 49, 2008, 59-86 (kindly pointed out to me by James Harrod, letter of Jan. 17, 2010).

<sup>48</sup> 48. Campbell I 1: 118 sqq.; Alfred R. Radcliffe-Brown. *The Andaman islanders: a study in social anthropology*. Cambridge: The University Press, [1906], 1922; 2<sup>nd</sup> printing (enlarged) 1933; reprint New York: The Free Press: 1964.

<sup>49</sup> 49. With the Aka-bea tribe: *oko-paiad*, or *taraba* 'dream'; there is no clear distinction between words.

<sup>50</sup> 50. J. Campbell (1988), however, does not discern trance, and hence no shamans.

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<sup>51</sup> 51. John Abbott, J. *The Keys of Power*, 1932, repr. as: *Indian Ritual and Belief. The Keys of Power*, Delhi 1984.

<sup>52</sup> 52. The term “shaman” is not frequently used for them in the literature; instead “medicine man, clever man, man of high degree” etc. Some scholars do not regard them as shamans as some aspects of *Siberian Shamanism* are missing; some women also act as shamans. See L. Hume in: Namba Walter and Neumann Fridman 2004: 860-865, Eliade 1951/ 1954: 135.

<sup>53</sup> 53. A similar concept is found with the Mayas: the vision serpent (and the double-headed serpent bat) are a path of communication between the two worlds (earth and the Otherworld, see Walter & Fridman 2004: 20)

<sup>54</sup> 54. Detailed discussion in Eliade 1954: 54 sqq.; cf. quotes in Robert Lawlor. *Voices of the First Day. Awakening in the Aboriginal Dreamtime*. Rochester VT: Inner Traditions, 1991: 374.

<sup>55</sup> 55. In N. Kimberley area, the incipient shaman is swallowed by the Rainbow Snake or scum from the snake’s pool is inserted (as snake egg) into his navel and grows inside him.

<sup>56</sup> 56. Mircea Eliade, *Schamanismus und archaische Ekstasetechnik*. Zürich: Rascher, 1954: 135.

<sup>57</sup> 57. Campbell I 2 : 169:

<sup>58</sup> 58. Lawlor 1991: 374.

<sup>59</sup> 59. Other, lower level shamans, are taken *underground* by a spirit:

- small crystals of other shamans are put into a spear thrower: they are placed/pushed along from the front of the legs upwards to the breast bone, scouring him three times; they are described as "pressed into his body", then further into his head, then into his arms;

- a pointed stick is inserted under the nail of the middle right finger; this is repeated; then the tongue pierced,

- the body is painted;

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- finally, the adept returns.

<sup>60</sup> 60. Eliade, *Schamanismus* 1954: 139. -- It must be noted that the S.E. Australian mythology differs considerably from that of the rest of the continent in having an All-Father being, perhaps due to former occupation by Tasmanians; as for shamanism, the role of a bird is stressed; cf. Witzel 2010.

<sup>61</sup> 61. Like the seam of the sky in the old Indian text Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 3.9, and like the Ainu heaven.

<sup>62</sup> 62. Eliade, *Schamanismus* 1954: 356 on shamanistic heat in general.

<sup>63</sup> 63. Otto Dempwolff. *Die Sandawe : linguistisches und ethnographisches Material aus Deutsch-Ostafrika.* Hamburg: L. Friederichsen, 1916.

<sup>64</sup> 64. Cf. the representations in European Palaeolithic art, at El Castillo, Bruniquel and Predmosti (see below).

<sup>65</sup> 65. Yogasūtra 3.28 (By self-control on the navel arises knowledge of the constitution of the body. 3.29 By self-control on the pit of the throat one subdues hunger and thirst. 3.30 By self-control on the tube within the chest one acquires absolute steadiness. 3.31 By self-control on the light in the head one envisions perfected beings. 3.33. Self-control on the heart brings knowledge of the mental entity). See the standard translation by Ernest Woods. *The Yoga-system of Patañjali* ... Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1914. -- Translation by BonGiovanni, <http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/yogasutr.htm>; <http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/ysp/ysp06.htm>. -- However, there also are a number of ‘powers’ (*siddhi*) that arise from meditation such as: levitation, walking on water, distant hearing, passing through space, becoming as tiny as an atom: Yogasūtra 3.38 “By self-control of the nerve-currents utilizing the lifebreath, one may levitate, walk on water, swamps, thorns, or the like. 3.39 By self-control over the maintenance of breath, one may radiate light. 3.40 By self-control on the relation of the ear to the ether one gains distant hearing. 3.41 By self-control over the relation of the body to the ether, and maintaining at the same time the thought of the lightness of cotton, one



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is able to pass through space. 3.42 By self-control on the mind when it is separated from the body - the state known as the Great Transcorporeal- all coverings are removed from the Light. 3.43 Mastery over the elements arises when their gross and subtle forms, as well as their essential characteristics, and the inherent attributes and experiences they produce, is examined in self-control. 3.44 Thereby one may become as tiny as an atom as well as having many other abilities, such as perfection of the body, and non-resistance to duty.” -- It is however cautioned in the Yogasūtra 3.50 that “visits by invisible beings” detract from the path. The *siddhi* powers gained by yoga, such as ‘flying’ etc. (rather, hopping) in Transcendental Meditation, must be *brought under control* in classical Yoga (Yogasūtra 3), as they are regarded as detractions from the aim, the achievement of mental equilibrium (*samādhi*). On the other hand, shamans of all shades actually believe to fly upwards/downwards (transl. BonGiovanni).

<sup>66</sup> 66. The medieval and modern Indian end-product, the classical Indian *Yoga*, however, is very different from classical northern and southern shamanism: not just socially, as has already been mentioned, but also in its very nature: shamanism usually is ‘ecstatic’, while Yoga normally is the opposite, it is ‘enstatic’ (Dietrich Langen. *Archaische Ekstase und asiatische Meditation mit ihren Beziehungen zum Abendland*. Stuttgart: Hippokrates 1963) -- some forms of left-handed Tantra obviously excluded.

<sup>67</sup> 67. The San (Bushmen), for their part, must have come from much farther north, where the Hadza and Sandawe still live, or even from the then verdant Sahara.

<sup>68</sup> 68. M. Witzel. “Comparison and Reconstruction: Language and Mythology.” *Mother Tongue VI* (2001: 45- 62; see now: *The Origins if the World’s Mythologies*, Oxford University Press 2010.

<sup>69</sup> 69. The concept of a Rainbow Snake is widespread in Gondwana areas. It may be very old, and of Pan-Gaeon origin, see Witzel 2010.

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<sup>70</sup> 70. For S. Australia see the illustration in William Ramsey Smith.

Aborigine Myths and Legends. London: Random 1996 [1930]: 175; for the Arunta tribe, see Lawlor 1991: 75, and maybe 226, 361. Cf. the use of the double *tjurunga*.

<sup>71</sup> 71. Maskarinec 1998, 2004, Oppitz.

<sup>72</sup> 72. Eliade 1954: 66.

<sup>73</sup> 73. See Walter and Fridman 2004: 16-25, 219-223; note the recently discovered Chauvet cave in the Ardèche region of France, of c. 33,000 BCE (which already has paintings with perspective, see Arnold, Maurice *et al.* Chauvet Cave: the art of earliest times. Directed by Jean Clottes; translated by Paul G. Bahn [with contributions by] Maurice Arnold ... [*et al.*]. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2003; Geneste, Jean-Michel. *La grotte Chauvet à Vallon-Pont-d'Arc : un bilan des recherches pluridisciplinaires : actes de la scéance de la Société préhistorique française, 11 et 12 octobre 2003, Lyon, sous la direction de Jean-Michel Geneste.* [Paris]: Société préhistorique française, 2005; Wunn 2005: 124), J. David Lewis-Williams. *The Mind in the Cave. Conciousness and the Origins of Art.* London: Thames and Hudson, 2002.

<sup>74</sup> 74. Note especially the pointing sticks or horns, attached to heads, as seen in Lascaux, with Australians and Bushmen: Campbell I 1 : 66 no. 106-7; 93 no. 170; cf. also the Mediterranean 'corna' gesture).

<sup>75</sup> 75. Walter and Fridman 2004: 747-750, 767-772, 775-778; Maskarinec 1998, 2004.

<sup>76</sup> 76. See Campbell 1988: I: 2, or, since the c. 1930, with the pagan Kalash of N.W. Pakistan.

<sup>77</sup> 77. For a short discussion see W. Burkert in: Jeremy Narby and Francis Huxley. *Shamans Through Time. 500 years on the path to knowledge.* London: Thames and Hudson, 2001: 223-226.

**93=78?** Shamanism in cave art has been asserted by D. Bruce Dickson. *The dawn of Belief, Religion in the Upper Palaeolithic of Southwestern Europe.* Tuscon:

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University of Arizona Press, 1990; Steven J. Mithen. *The prehistory of the mind : a search for the origins of art, religion, and science*. London, New York: Thames and Hudson, 1996; cf. various sites at: <http://www.bradshawfoundation.com/>.

<sup>79</sup> 79. Karl J. Narr. "Prehistoric religion". *Britannica online encyclopedia* 2008.

<sup>80</sup> 80. In November 2008, a 12,000-year-old site in Israel was discovered, the earliest known shaman burials. An elderly woman-- Among her grave goods were 50 complete tortoise shells, a human foot, a cow tail and eagle wings(!), remains of a boar, leopard, and two martens. Apparently, there was a close relationship with animal spirits, see:

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/11/081105083721.htm>;

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2008/11/081104-israel-shaman-missions.html>

and Leore Grosman *et al.* A 12,000-year-old shaman burial from the southern Levant (Israel).

<http://www.pnas.org/content/early/2008/10/31/0806030105.abstract?sid=14f681c8-ed95-4716-9cf7-40936fd05573>. -- Another recent find is that of a woman in the Czech Republic, from the Upper Paleolithic; see Tedlock, Barbara. 2005. *The Woman in the Shaman's Body: Reclaiming the Feminine in Religion and Medicine*. New York: Bantam.

<sup>81</sup> 81. Cf. Burkert 1979: 88 sqq. - For a detailed discussion, see Lewis-Williams 2002.

<sup>82</sup> 82. Walter & Friedman 2004.

<sup>83</sup> 83. Mortensen, Eric. Raven augury in Tibet, northwest Yunnan, Inner Asia, and circumpolar regions. A study in comparative folklore and religion. PhD thesis, Harvard University, 2003.

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<sup>84</sup> 84. Wunn, Ina. *Wunn, Die Religionen in vorgeschichtlicher Zeit*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer 2005: 115; Wunn, Ina. Beginning of Religion. *Numen* 47, 2000, 417-452.

<sup>85</sup> 85. Breuil, the pioneer of cave art studies, saw hunting and fertility magic in the Franco-Cantabrian cave paintings. However, his sketches and paintings have recently been criticized as incomplete, idealizing and idiosyncratic (Lorblanchet, Michel. *Grottes ornées de la préhistoire*. [German trans. *Höhlenmalerei : ein Handbuch. Herausgegeben, mit einem Vorwort und einem Beitrag zur Wandkunst im Ural von Gerhard Bosinski. Aus dem Französischen übertragen von Peter Nittmann*. 2., aktualisierte Aufl. Stuttgart: J. Thorbecke, 2000]: 81 sqq, Wunn 2005: 122). Most subsequent interpretations rest on his drawings, which continue to be used uncritically.

<sup>86</sup> 86. Leroi-Gourhan used a structural method, discovering an organized universe with a fixed ‘syntax’: all motifs are male/female symbols. (Lorblanchet 2000: 83). Similarly,

Anette Laming-Empeire. *La signification de l’art rupestre paléolithique*. Paris: A. & J. Picard, 1962; Lorblanchet 2000: 83) rather see themes with a sexual background. Later on, Leroi-Gourhan shifted his interpretations to one of the cave as a sanctuary.

<sup>87</sup> 87. Wunn 2005: 116 sqq.; cf. Leonard, Scott and Michael McClure. *Myth and Knowing. An Introduction to World Mythology*. Boston: McGrawHill, 2004: 185 sq.

<sup>88</sup> 88. Eliade 1978: 28.

<sup>89</sup> 89. Illustration in Campbell 1988 I: 76.

<sup>90</sup> 90. For depictions of such shaman-like figures see Campbell 1988: I 1: 74, 78, and I. 2: 156, Marija Gimbutas. *The language of the Goddess: Unearthing the hidden symbols of Western Civilization*. New York: Thames and Hudson 1991:176). Leonard and McClure 2004: 186 have a current photo of the ‘sorcerer’, juxtaposed to

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Breuil's sketch; the figure is attributed to 13,000 BCE. For another, still older photo of c. 1960, see Dietrich Langen. *Archaische Ekstase und asiatische Meditation mit ihren Beziehungen zum Abendland*, Stuttgart: Hippokrates 1963 : 129.

<sup>91</sup> 91. Illustration in Campbell 1988: I.1: 65.

<sup>92</sup> 92. Heri Breuil. *Four Hundred centuries of Cave art*. Montignac: Centre d'Etudes et Documentations Préhistoriques, 1952: 144-146, Johannes Maringer. *Vorgeschichtliche Religion. Religionen im steinzeitlichen Europa*. Einsiedeln: Benzinger 1956: 130.

<sup>93</sup> 93. Horst Kirchner. "Ein archäologischer Beitrag zur Urgeschichte des Schamanismus." *Anthropos* 47 (1952): 244-286, Eliade 1954, Joseph Campbell. *Primitive mythology*. Harmondsworth UK, New York: Penguin 1987 [1969]: 310.

<sup>94</sup> 94. Kindly pointed out to me by James Harrod (letters of Dec. 09, 2009 and January 17, 2010), see his website: <http://www.originsnet.org/>, and cf. also <http://pleistocenecoalition.com/>).

<sup>95</sup> 95. André Leroi-Gourhan. *Treasures of Prehistoric Art*. New York: H. N. Abrams, 1967.

<sup>96</sup> 96. A. Marshak. *The Roots of Civilization*. New York: McGraw Hill, 1971.

<sup>97</sup> 97. Bellah, Robert N. "Religious Evolution." *American Sociological Review* 29, 1964, 358-74.

<sup>98</sup> 98. Ina Wunn. *Die Religionen in vorgeschichtlicher Zeit*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2005: 132; cf. Wunn, "Beginning of Religion." *Numen* 47 (2000): 417-452. Wunn complains that, instead, incidental selection of motives, and old ideas of prehistoric religion prevail.

<sup>99</sup> 99. See Ōbayashi 1991.

<sup>100</sup> 100. Campbell 1988: 65, 74, 76.

<sup>101</sup> 101. Is the San/Sandawe version still closer to the original African version of shamanism?

<sup>102</sup> 102. Witzel 2010.

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<sup>103</sup> 103. Walter and Fridman 2004: 893.

<sup>104</sup> 104. Hoppál 2006: 99.

<sup>105</sup> 105. Witzel 2001, 2010.

<sup>106</sup> 106. See examples with Indo-Europeans, or in Japan, or with the Taiwan Ami tribe; note also that any hunter's language is archaic; cf. also the Indian 'truth sorcery' (*satyakriyā*).

<sup>107</sup> 107. Cf. Gregory Maskarinec for Central Nepal: Nepalese Shaman Oral Texts, edited, translated and annotated. Cambridge: Harvard Oriental Series, 1998, and: "Nepalese Shamans." In: Walter and Neumann Fridman, vol. 2, 766-772.

<sup>108</sup> 108. Various designs used by individual populations: medieval European and Tibetan 'memory palaces', Vedic Indian's mental designs to keep a fixed order of the 1028 hymns of their oldest text, the Ṛgveda, or the Polynesian method of using the skeleton of a fish, on whose bones certain data are 'stored' (see M. Witzel, "How to enter the Vedic mind? Strategies in Translating a Brāhmaṇa text." In *Translating, Translations, Translators From India to the West*, ed. Enrica Garzilli. Cambridge: Harvard Oriental Series, Opera Minora, 1996.

<http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~witzel/How-to-Enter.pdf>). The Papuan and Andamanese (and S.E. Australian) way of counting, or rather tallying, is not very different from each other, see M. Witzel, "The Numeral System of Jarawa Andamanese." *Mother Tongue* VII, (2002a): 265-272.